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TORONTO STAR

Memo: Pin it all on Oswald

Special to The Star

WASHINGTON — "The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial."

This memo to the White House from Deputy Attorney-General Nicholas Katzenback summed up the determination of U.S. officials to depict Lee Harvey Oswald as the lone killer of President John Kennedy in 1963, according to a Senate committee.

4 DAYS LATER

The final report of the Senate intelligence committee charged yesterday that the CIA and FBI were guilty of a "cover-up" of information that could have affected the investigation of Kennedy's death.

The report dealt heavily with CIA plotting against Cuban Premier Fidel Castro prior to Kennedy's assassination.

Katzenbach's memo, written four days after Kennedy was shot, went on to say that speculation about Oswald's motive "ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists."

By that time, the Senate report showed, the CIA was already making efforts to head off talk of a conspiracy. It attempted, unsuccessfully, on Nov. 23, 1963, to head off the imminent arrest by Mexican police of Sylvia Duran, an employee of the Cuban consulate in Mexico City with whom Oswald had talked on a visit there two months earlier.

COULDN'T REMEMBER

Informed by the CIA's Mexico station that the arrest could not be prevented, a top-ranking official in the CIA's Directorate for Plans, Thomas Karamessines, cabled back that the arrest "could Jeopardize U.S. freedom of action on the whole question of Cuban responsibility."

Questioned by the Senate committee two months ago, Karamessines, the report said, "could not recall preparing the cable or his reasons for issuing such a message. He speculated that the CIA feared the Cubans were responsible, and that Duran might reveal this during an interrogation.

"He further speculated that if Duran did possess such information, the CIA and the U.S. government would need time to react before it came to the attention of the public."

—Washington Post